

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
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April 10, 2007

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Waxman:

I respectfully request that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform hold a hearing on the federal government's preparation for the forthcoming hurricane season.

With just 51 days until the official start of hurricane season, a leading hurricane forecasting team from Colorado State University predicts that 2007 will be very active, with 17 named storms between June 1 and November 30. Nine of the 17 storms are predicted to become hurricanes, and of those nine, five are expected to develop into intense or major hurricanes. Of these storms, the forecasters at Colorado State predict:

1. A 74 percent chance that at least one major hurricane will make landfall on the U.S. coastline in 2007 (the long-term average probability is 52 percent);
2. A 50 percent chance that a major hurricane will make landfall on the U.S. East Coast, including the Florida Peninsula (the long-term average is 31 percent);
3. A 49 percent chance that a major hurricane will make landfall on the Gulf Coast from the Florida Panhandle west to Brownsville (the long-term average is 30 percent).

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As you know, the Committee held a hearing on this issue on May 24, 2006. At that hearing we learned about FEMA's preparation for the 2006 hurricane season. In light of the well-known impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we need to find out how all levels of government are preparing for the 2007 season. Specifically, I suggest the Committee evaluate the following:

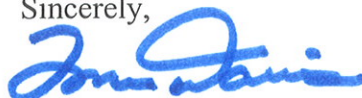
1. The adequacy of FEMA's National Response Plans for a category 4 or 5 hurricane and the possibility of multiple named hurricanes making landfall within days or weeks of each other;
2. How FEMA is coordinating plans with appropriate State and Local officials;
3. What role the military, especially the National Guard, is expected to play in each scenario as planned for by FEMA and governors;
4. The status of FEMA's personnel system and the adequacy of human capital resources;
5. FEMA's understanding of its budget and its sufficiency to sustain 2007 efforts.

Although scientists were off on their 2006 hurricane predictions, we cannot afford to be lulled into a false sense of security.

As you'll recall, I chaired the Select Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. Further, over the last two years, our Committee has played a key role in ensuring the federal government's emergency response capabilities are addressed so our residents will know that when major disasters occur, their tax dollars will go to work for them as effectively and efficiently as possible. I know you share my concern that we must do everything to reduce the physical, financial and emotional harm of a devastating hurricane, so I look forward to working with you to address this important issue.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tom Davis  
Ranking Republican Member